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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/783,985	02/19/2004	Nathan Dahl	10739.17.64	4387

22859 7590 04/04/2005

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EXAMINER

HURLEY, KEVIN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3611

DATE MAILED: 04/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/783,985

Applicant(s)

DAHL ET AL.

Examiner

Kevin Hurley

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 2 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 February 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☒ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-3 and 22-39 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 4-21 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 February 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of the restriction requirement in the reply filed on 7 February 2005 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the inventions are not independent inventions and does not meet the requirement under MPEP 806(A) that there be "no disclosed relation therebetween". This is not found persuasive because as "independent" is defined in MPEP 806.04 and 806.04(A) recites "Two different combinations, not disclosed as capable of use together, having different modes of operation, different functions or different effects are independent." Applicant has not shown how the different claimed combinations are disclosed as being capable of use together, nor that they have the same modes of operation. Specifically, the vehicles of claims I-IV have not been disclosed as capable of use together. Furthermore they each have different modes of operation, Group I has two switch positions which operate a locking differential. Group II has three switch positions controlling a front wheel coupler and a rear locking differential. Group III has two switch positions controlling a front wheel coupler and a rear wheel locking differential. Group IV has two switch positions controlling a front wheel locking differential and a rear wheel locking differential. Clearly each has a different mode of operation.

Applicant has also argued that the inventions are not distinct. It is noted that MPEP 808.02(A) sets forth that distinctness can be shown by a "Separate classification thereof: This shows that each distinct subject has attained recognition in the art as a separate subject for inventive effort, and also a separate field of search. Patents need not be cited to show separate

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classification.”

Finally applicant argues that examination of the groups would not require additional search or impose significant burden on the Office. The examiner disagrees as searching through thousands of patents for four different inventions, and the subsequent patentability determination thereof, does indeed impose a serious burden on the examiner.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. Claims 1-3, and 22-39 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 7 February 2005.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the “coupler” must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must

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be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The cited references disclose part time four wheel drive vehicles with locking differentials.

5. This application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters.

Prosecution on the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.


A shortened statutory period for reply to this action is set to expire **TWO MONTHS** from the mailing date of this letter.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Hurley whose telephone number is 571-272-6646. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:30-5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on 571-272-6612. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Kevin Hurley
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3611

March 28, 2005